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ABSTRACT

This brochure focuses on characteristics of severely disadvantaged young children as they come to school, and describes some of the things the visiting specialists found skillful teachers in 16 cities were doing to help children overcome their handicaps. The report shows: (1) How teachers arrange classrooms to stimulate curiosity and learning; (2) How teachers arrange classrooms to stimulate children to work and play to lure them into speaking, reading, writing, and socializing, as they explore the in- and out-of-school environment; (3) How teachers use materials of all sorts to broaden children's horizons, including tape recordings of their own voices, trips to important places, and discussions of exciting events; and, (4) How children slowly emerge from being withdrawn, uncommunicative young people into being friendly, responsive children. The brochure is intended for an audience of teachers and administrators of children in kindergarten through the third grade, who have responsibility for planning education experiences for their children. (Author/SB)

DISADVANTAGED
CHILDREN SERIES
No. 2

OE-35066

Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Years

(Kindergarten Through Grade 3)

by

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FOREWORD

THE NATION IS FACED TODAY WITH A PROBLEM OF educating unprecedented numbers of severely disadvantaged young people who, due to serious deprivation in the environment, lack the experiences which lead to success in school. Consequently, many of them enter school psychologically, socially, and intellectually unready to meet school expectancies; and, as a result, many of them meet continuous failure and drop out at the earliest opportunity.

The problem of educating these young people is crucial in the large cities where the proportion of children living in such areas is presently estimated as 1 out of 3. It is predicted that by 1970 the proportion may rise to 1 out of 2 children. Since urban children comprise more than 70 percent of the children in the Nation, the scope and seriousness of this problem is evident.

Because of the rising interest in the education of disadvantaged children, staff members of the Office of Education visited large cities in the spring and early fall of 1964 to collect information about what schools in these cities were doing for disadvantaged children, ages 3 through 11. In addition, a conference was held in the Office of Education which included the consultant help of two outstanding researchers in this field — Dr. Robert Hess, chairman of the Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago, and Dr. Lassar Gotkins, senior research associate, New York Medical College — and two school administrators in representative large cities — Miss Mary Adams, assistant superintendent in charge of elementary education in the Baltimore City Schools, and Dr. Rebecca Winton, director of early childhood education in the New York City Public Schools.

Findings from these activities are being published in a series of brochures called *Disadvantaged Children.* Four brochures are planned. The first, *Educating Disadvantaged Children Under Six* (Nursery School and Kindergarten), is in press. This brochure, *Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Years* (Kindergarten Through Grade 3), is the second of the series. *Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Middle Grades* (Grades 4 Through 6) and *Administration of Elementary School Programs for Disadvantaged Children* will follow.

The Office of Education acknowledges the cooperation of the school systems, teachers, and consultants who contributed so generously to the study.

FRED F. BEACH
Director, Elementary and Secondary
Organization and Administration Branch

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INTRODUCTION

SCHOOLS LOCATED IN HEAVILY CONCENTRATED DISADVANTAGED AREAS, such as are found in most large cities, face unique problems in starting children on their school careers. The deprived nature of the environment — with its shortages in almost everything but people, noise, and squalor — causes these children to reach school totally unprepared to cope with the school environment or with school expectations. They come to school with almost no ability to use a verbal language, with extremely limited knowledge of cultural items generally familiar to young children in our society, with little understanding of their own environment and none of the world beyond a range of three to four blocks, with few intellectual concepts, and with almost no ability to associate with other people.

Schools which receive these children have responsibility for (1) helping them develop a language for thinking and communicating; (2) extending their experiences in fundamental ways; (3) starting them on the road to attitudes, skills, abilities, and understandings necessary for constructive living and school achievement; and (4) instilling a sense of self-confidence and pride.

School administrators in the largest cities are fully aware of the scope and implications of the problem and of the school's responsibility toward these children as individuals and citizens. Some of them are already making adaptations in the kindergarten and early grades, encouraging changes in organization, curriculum, methods of teaching, and special services to meet the educational needs of these boys and girls. Some administrators have encouraged and cooperated in experimental programs for small groups of children below 6 years of age. (See first brochure in this series, *Educating Disadvantaged Children Under Six.*)

Efforts to improve and adapt the primary school program are being assisted by funds from foundations, organizations, institutions, and the local, State, and Federal Governments.[1] Voluntary organizations and institutions — such as churches, Council of Jewish Women, Junior League, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, secondary schools, and nearby colleges and universities — as well as interested individuals, lend a hand in such ways as providing aides for teachers and tutors for children.

This brochure, *Educating Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Years*, describes characteristics of severely disadvantaged young children as they come to school, and relates some of the things the visiting specialists found skillful teachers in 16 cities doing to help children overcome their handicaps. The report shows:

- How teachers arrange classrooms to stimullate curiosity and learning.
- How teachers utilize the natural tendencies of children to work and play to lure them into speaking, reading, writing, and socializing, as they explore the in- and out-of-school environment.
- How teachers use materials of all sorts to broaden children's horizons, including tape recordings of their own voices; trips to important places, such as the zoo and a farm; and discussions of exciting events, such as John Glenn's "going into orbit" and the coming space and moon flights.
- How children slowly emerge from withdrawn, uncommunicative young people into friendly, responsive boys and girls, able to cope day by day with the demands of life and learning.

The brochure will be of particular help to teachers and administrators who have responsibility for planning educational experiences for these children.

[1] Ford Foundation funds were used in 11 of the 16 cities visited: Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New Haven, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. California and New York has made available some State funds; Cleveland and Washington, D. C. has secured some Federal funds.

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THE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD

WHAT A CHILD LEARNS in the early years of school — about himself, others, his world, and the ways of thinking and behaving — influences his attitudes toward school thereafter. Through the way he is treated, particularly by his teachers, he learns to think of himself as a person of importance or as one who is inferior. The feelings of personal worth and the self-confidence which enable him to take active interest in school and to attack the problems he faces are largely reflections of an environment where he is understood and valued as a person as well as a learner. In this environment, the image he develops of himself generates power to move ahead rather than to retreat.

The school seeks to help each child, whether he is deprived or privileged, develop as a happy, healthy, self-reliant, outgoing person who enjoys associating with others, is curious about the world, and has the initiative to pursue this curiosity to a point of satisfaction. In addition, the school has the responsibility to start each learner well on the way, at his own rate, in his academic career.

If the school is to introduce a child to the excitement and satisfactions of learning, it must first put him at ease in his surroundings, removing that which threatens him and freeing him to venture. Following this, the school must provide experiences which the child thinks worthwhile. The teacher is successful when she constantly blends child security, child interest, curricular requirements, and teaching into a harmonious pattern in which the child moves steadily to greater maturity in every area of life.

For most children, school experience is a continuation of preschool experience at home and in the community. From the beginning they are able to cope with the major activities of kindergarten and first grade. Coming from the same stratum of society as

that of the teacher, they have poise to meet the teacher and the children, a 5- to 6-year-old sense of appropriateness or order, a language with which to converse, and understandings to share. Children who are severely deprived in early childhood do not experience this continuation. For them, entrance into school presents discontinuity.

Yet the aims for severely deprived children are not different from those of others. Only the beginning point of their education and the continuous reference points are different. Severely limited experiences have caused gaps in the development of these children, which must be bridged before they can progress in school as other children do.

Researchers and teachers working with children who have experienced extended deprivation agree that:

1. The most apparent handicap to their progress in school is the absence of an adequate language with which to clarify ideas and to communicate with others at school. (5, 34)[2]
2. The language handicap is produced by severe limitations in experience. As a result, the children have little understanding of things, places, events, and people commonly familiar to children entering school. They have vague knowledge of and little confidence in themselves, and they do not mix well with others.
3. These children, like others, want to learn and can learn. The school's task is to provide the environment and plan the educational experiences to enable them to progress happily and continuously.

Being deficient in verbal language, they must pause on the threshhold of school to develop a language, a process much more difficult than it would have been earlier. Lacking the fundamental concepts commonly held by 5- and 6-year-olds, upon which communication at school and school learning are based, they must develop many of these concepts before they can progress in the customary school curriculum. The school situation being so unfamiliar, they need more time and more help in building self-trust and trust in the

[2] Numbers in parentheses are keyed to the references in the bibliography.

teacher and school. The school must work within the framework of their limited experience while steadily broadening their horizons.

Organization

Is there a way to organize the K to 3 unit to facilitate the educational progress of these children?

Children of similar age from any segment of society show great variation in learning potential and achievement. This variation may be expected to be greatest among children whose preschool environment has handicapped their learning. Once under way, varying rates of progress naturally result, perhaps even more so than in the typical middle-class school. Some children need only the usual 4 years from kindergarten to the end of the third grade; some will undoubtedly need additional time and carefully planned help.

Are there principles or guidelines which may help one make decisions about organization?

1. *The principle of individual differences.* The size of school or school unit and the way the school is administered should make it possible for each child to be regarded as a worthy individual.

2. *The principle of flexibility.* No matter what the organization, it should recognize the child's beginning point, and should then facilitate (not obstruct) his natural stride in learning.

3. *The principle of interrelatedness in growth.* A child's progress should be judged on the full spectrum of important components: his physical status and needs, social characteristics and competencies, rate and style of learning, and emotional poise, as well as his scholastic achievement or promise.

4. *The principle of harmony in the work setting.* A child should be placed where he can, without excessive pressure, maintain achievement and satisfying human relationships. Teacher-child relationships should be harmonious. Child-child relationships should produce friendships. The work expected should be challenging but within reach without outside pressure, such as competition, grades, awards, punishment, or failure. Materials and activities should be suited to the child's development.

5. *The principle of consistency among adults responsible for him.* The child's important adults (especially the principal, teacher or teachers, and parents) should work in harmony to help him succeed.

How shall we organize?

Some school staffs claim that they are able to maintain these favorable conditions for children within a graded heterogeneous setting; others claim they do as well with homogeneous grouping based on one or a few characteristics. Still others favor a local version of "team teaching." Most, however, think the ungraded or nongraded primary unit (4) with its provision for individual progress is best adaptable to the irregularities of growth and learning. Each of these ways of organizing has weaknesses and strengths for children. Each depends for its success upon the professional understanding and enthusiasm of the teachers involved; and each is fraught with the dangers of rigidity when teacher-interest or creativeness or administrative understanding and support lag. The ultimate test of any plan is whether it accommodates the most important elements of each child's growth and learning, and his smooth pace upward through school.

The Teacher

In all schools, the teacher is the most vital factor in the lives of children. Teachers selected to deal with severely disadvantaged children need an abundance of wisdom, human warmth, and sensitivity, for these children need much affection, understanding, and guidance. (1) From the beginning, the teacher will need to establish and maintain direct, personal, and friendly contact with every child in order to make him feel comfortable and to promote teacher-child rapport. Daily, she will greet each one personally — especially those attending school for the first time. She must accept and work with all children — and parents — even those whose behavior and language violate her own social codes. At every step of the way she will be called upon for guidance, for reassurance and affirmations of faith, and for the wisdom, stability, and strength which give children security and point the way for growth.

Because it is difficult for children to advance without the understanding and support of their parents, teachers must work with parents. Together, the principal, teachers, and especially the home visitor or school social worker will find ways to engage parents in helping their children succeed educationally.

Most teachers, having middle-class backgrounds, require particular orientation to the task of dealing with severely disadvantaged children. To help them gain insight into the characteristics and deprivations of the children and into the function of school education — particularly their own teaching function — opportunity should be provided, prior to the opening of school, for them to study and interpret neighborhoods, family life, and childhood life under the guidance of knowledgeable and sensitive specialists, such as sociologists, community leaders, social workers, successful school principals and teachers, and wise parents. The teacher must also learn the resources in the school and community available to her in teaching these children.

The teacher will need help in constructing a framework of curriculum content and sequence which children are expected to gain during the primary years. Because the beginning point of school education for disadvantaged children is characteristically much lower than their chronological ages indicate, teachers will need assistance in learning how school-age children can be taught things others learn at earlier ages primarily through imitation or family instruction: communicating; associating with others; understanding concepts of things, persons, space, color, size, and time; and observing the beginning of essential order of organization. Some help may be gained by studying the curriculum provided generally for children in these years (3, 9, 11, and others), but teachers will need the help of psychologists and child development specialists for more precise understanding of methods of teaching which may help children acquire these too-long delayed skills and understandings.

Because teachers working in these areas are pioneering, they will themselves need encouragement. Consultants should be available from the school system, nearby colleges and universities, and the com-

munity. Teachers should also have opportunities to exchange experiences with other teachers and to develop some guidelines for their own use and for the use of new teachers. Skillful teachers should be identified and used to stimulate and assist others.

The Curriculum

The curriculum of the primary school unit for disadvantaged children should include all the content areas provided for other children: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, health, and physical education. Well-established principles of learning used with other children also apply here:

- Children must be interested in what they are to learn.
- They must have purpose in learning.
- There must be a basis in experience for understanding the new.
- What is put to use is best remembered.
- Ideas that are interrelated are best remembered and available for future use.
- It takes time to learn, and each child learns according to his own timetable.

The success of the curriculum of the primary unit for disadvantaged children depends on its adaptability to general and specific needs of the children. Realistic adaptation is crucial if *each child* is to find his starting point and progress from that point forward. It is essential, for instance, that the class which receives beginners — whether nursery school, kindergarten, or first grade — be equipped and organized to provide the educational experiences which each pupil needs to take up the gaps in his development and learn to cope with schoolwork.

A few of the children entering first grade will be fortunate enough to have had 1 or 2 years of preliminary education in nursery school and kindergarten. Although their abilities will vary and the first-grade teacher must provide for continuity in learning for every individual, many of the children will be able to proceed gradually with the customary work of first grade. The majority of the deprived children, however, will enter first grade without such preliminary educa-

tional advantages. These children will need time, opportunity, and help *within the first year of school* to acquire the understandings and abilities which the others have acquired in the preprimary years. For this reason, in first grades dealing primarily with deprived children, the equipment, arrangement, and program will more nearly resemble kindergartens, especially at the beginning and continuing well into the school year. The teacher's sensitivity and professional competence will dictate the time when individuals or groups are ready to progress, without undue pressure, to the more customary work of the first grade. Full recognition of these conditions should be made by school authorities so that fundamental education may be paced according to individual rates of learning without stigma for the children, teacher, or school.

Classroom Materials and Experiences

Because the school environment is almost completely novel for these children, care should be taken to orient them without frustration. The classroom should be simply arranged and inviting, designed to stimulate confidence, curiosity, manipulation, and learning. In the kindergarten, there should be a home play corner with multicultural dolls, beds, dishes, sink, refrigerator, stove, cleaning equipment, dress-up clothes, and rockers; a toy area with farm and city layouts, plastic animals, and workers; a wheel toy area; a block play area; book shelves and a library corner with tape recorder and earphones; a woodworking area with workbench, saws, hammers, and wood; easels and paints, and a place to use materials such as clay, sand, and sawdust; a piano and other musical instruments; multicolored balls; an open area for rhythms, dance, dramatization, and running; a rug for sitting; chairs and tables for individuals or groups; and a low drinking fountain. A toilet room should adjoin the main classroom. Bulletin boards should be in abundance to accommodate posting the children's work.

Outdoor space and equipment should be near the classroom and should provide for such activities as running, skipping, swinging, climbing, and sliding;

water and sand play; wheel toy play; ball play; and woodwork.

At the opening of school, a few well-selected objects — such as balls, dolls, blocks, and a wheel toy or two — should be placed strategically to attract children's attention. The teacher and her assistants should be on the alert to lead or direct children when they do not enter into play spontaneously, explaining by word, gesture, demonstration, or other means what is expected, using as much repetition as necessary to make the point clear.

As children experiment with the materials and equipment, words are introduced and social interchange encouraged. Gradually new materials which have been held in reserve are introduced with emphasis on spoken vocabulary, and on where and how the materials may be used. Orderliness in getting things out, using them creatively but thoughtfully, and putting them away properly should be developed gradually in ways which do not place strain upon the children.

Because concept development in young children depends in large part upon motor-sensory and exploratory experiences, there should be ab .ant opportunity for children to use materials, dramatize human activities in the home and at work, and perform the roles of other children and adults through play. A large area is essential for dynamic activity: home play; city and farm play; construction; pulling, dragging, pushing, and steering vehicles; dramatic, rhythmic, and musical activities; and — especially in inclement weather when children cannot go outdoors — running, jumping, and playing games. Access to such activity is of benefit for all children throughout the primary unit, but the *deprivations of disadvantaged young children make it essential for them.*

Books which appeal to children form an essential part of the environment of every classroom in the school. In the primary unit dealing with disadvantaged children, these include many well-selected picture books, story books, poetry books; books about social centers such as the home, the school, the grocery story, or the airport; books of their own photographs and activities; and, eventually, books for the

teaching of school subjects. There should also be a shelf of books for the teacher.

Available material to develop ideas of language and number should include tape recorders and earphones, a record player, and a piano, as well as alphabet, letter, and number cutouts.

Children learn to talk. — When these children enter school — whether in nursery school, kindergarten, or first grade, many use a language made up of grimaces, gestures, and single words, with an admixture of invented words — or at best a vocabulary of terms which they have found useful on the streets and in the meager conversations of the home. Some children, especially those in Southwestern United States and in New York City, come with a language well developed, but not in English (38); others, with verbal facility in a form of English which is difficult to understand because it is so strongly colloquial. (30) Colorful as these languages may be, they require some adaptation and restructuring to enable children to communicate in the classroom and to cope with school learning.

The enormity of the problem the child now faces in developing verbal communication becomes apparent when one realizes that the typical 6-year-old in our society comes to school with a speaking vocabulary of approximately 2,000 words and an understanding vocabulary of some 25,000. (23) Furthermore, his understanding enables him to select words and order them into related units, such as phrases or sentences, which convey meaning to him and to others. Not so the disadvantaged child. His facility must come "the hard way." If he is to do well in school, he must "catch up" in a short time in a language in which others are already fluent, having had several years of informal practice; and he must now gain fluency through efforts which will frequently entail work and study.

The primary focus of the school for several years, then, is on developing a language. The curriculum in the classrooms is based, first, on experiencing and conversing, then gradually on reading, writing, and numbers, with the content always selected to relate to and broaden the backgrounds of the children and to lead toward individual growth.

To develop language ability, emphasis should first be placed on increasing the speaking vocabulary. In the classrooms teachers make use of identifying labels on objects, photographs, and drawings to encourage recognition of the word or words and to lay a foundation for meaningful reading. Attention is called to the names of persons, things, animals, qualities, and quantities. These are repeated often by the teacher. Creative activities, such as dramatizations, songs, rhymes, and games encourage use, repetition, conceptual identification and integration into the vocabulary.

Short phrases and sentences are accompanied by gesture or action, as "Bring the ball, Jim. Roll it to Mary." "Mary, roll it to Charles." "Charles, roll the ball to someone." "John, put the book away." "Kathie, get the book out." The teacher guides these experiences, introducing the concepts which these children may have missed, such as color, size, shape, distance, time, purpose. She uses materials to develop ability to discriminate likenesses and differences; to classify, organize, and generalize. She notes the progress of children in comparing size, color, shape, and other characteristics of such objects as blocks, balls, trees, and toys used in play situations, on walks, and at other times. She introduces and helps them use words to show distinguishing qualitative and quantitative characteristics: big, small; tall, short; heavy, light; white, black; wet, dry; sweet, sour. She does not take for granted that children understand, but takes time to test the concepts periodically. Various shapes, as in puzzles, are provided for matching or for fitting into a space. Letters of the alphabet are provided, too, for play situations in which children match, name, and reproduce them, and eventually make simple words from them.

Gradually, too, the teacher "draws out" of children a brief experience based on "Today's Trip," "The Weather," "Our Visitor," "Our News," or some other person or event of common interest. She writes it on newsprint paper with an illustration, if possible, and displays it prominently. Or she may draw out a single sentence from individual children; duplicate each sentence, attaching the appropriate child's name; post the sentence on the bulletin board; and make copies to send home to the parents.

Children learn about the world. — In the early years of the primary unit, particularly in kindergarten and first grade, experiences are drawn customarily from and interpreted back to the schoolroom, school, homes, and neighborhood where children live. This is essential in working with disadvantaged children. (7, 26, 30) People, plants, animals, places, and events become centers for school walking trips and related followup activities, such as discussions in which children are encouraged to do most of the talking; viewing simple pictures, slides, films; dramatizing in pantomime and with speech; building, painting, and drawing; singing, dancing, and the like.

In grades two and three, experiences are drawn from a broader area, but primarily from the community: studying the elements that make a good community, how goods and services reach the families, the work adults do.

Although the curriculum is centered around helping children observe and understand the near environment, trips are made beyond the neighborhood to enlarge the scope of reality, to stir the imagination, and to extend conceptual understanding. Trips requiring group transportation are carefully selected on the basis of their demonstrated and potential value to children as sources of growth in language, especially vocabulary, extension of concepts, and their possibility for stimulating classroom activities of an educational nature. A bus ride, the zoo, natural history museums, a city "overlook" which gives perspective — especially if the teacher is acquainted with the area and can point out places, a circus, a farm, stores, a children's drama or opera — are examples of experiences with "lead-on" value for further activity and learning.

Photographs of children on the trips are a good medium for excitement and conversation, for stimulating recall, for sharing with parents, and for development of self-image.

Objects brought to the school by the children or the teacher can stimulate discussion and immediate and extensive study: eggs to hatch in an incubator; seeds or bulbs to plant to become flowering gifts to take home or for use in science; cocoons to watch as moths

emerge; an abacus; a magnifying glass; a new book and possibly a toy that relates to its theme.

Numerous events outside school are of interest to children and may inspire real expression and learning. John Glenn goes into orbit and even 5-year-olds in a "project school," who do not speak much are excited. Michael says, "Maybe he's 80 miles up now." Kathleen says, "Two men already went up." Paula says, "I saw the rocket. It was going five miles and two miles." Gerald says, "I covered my eyes. I was scared." Alvin says, "He went around the sky." They even dictated stories to the teacher and then illustrated them.

The youth appeal of the Beatles is reflected even in a kindergarten of 5-year-olds who, in a "free play" period, spontaneously dramatized the singers, with full complement of appropriate gestures and songs.

The possibilities of closed-circuit television are being explored in one city. Programs produced by the teachers in one school and beamed to four nearby schools are found stimulating and informative to children. A series, "TV Stories for Primary Children," is especially popular.

Under the guidance of a skillful teacher, every activity is made to contribute to the development of speech, conversation, and conceptual understanding.

The value of role-playing in the encouragement of speech is shown in the following incident. A visitor noted a kindergarten child going to the home-play corner, where she put her "baby" to bed, put on an apron, cooked an imaginary meal, and sat down to eat it. The visitor asked, "What are you eating?" With assumed adult dignity, the child responded, "Soup. I made it. It's good." These were the first words the child had spoken at school.

Children learn to listen. — Children whose out-of-school lives are surrounded by noises develop the ability to select what they will and will not hear; that is, they develop the ability to allow certain items to come to the level of consciousness, while others are ignored or relegated to oblivion or subconsciousness. Success in school life and in school work depends in part on their developing a new code of items to be weighed consciously. Frequently, for instance, they have learned *not* to hear the voice of the adult unless it

represents a threat to security. Before they can progress very far in school, they must learn to listen and take directions from the adult rather than to ignore or resist. Many activities will require their listening to children as well. To some degree, listening, an activity involving mental activity, as opposed to hearing, which is a physiological process, is a skill which all children entering school need to learn. With many disadvantaged children, the need has serious proportions.

A school day is replete with opportunities to focus on listening: lullabies sung or nursery rhymes recited by the teacher and repeated by the children; stories or short poems read by the teacher and then dramatized by the children; simple but necessary directions given clearly and slowly until comprehended and followed; words pronounced carefully with patient and clear attention to beginning and ending sounds (experience shows that words learned at school rather than those learned before beginning school are likely to be spoken more correctly in free conversation); deliberate but natural conversation, with emphasis on listening to what others are saying and getting meaning from it; and above all, opportunities for children to talk in situations requiring them to convey a message and to listen to a response: "Is that your doll, Kathy?" "No, it is my sister's."

Tapes and discs are proving useful in developing listening ability among disadvantaged children. In several primary grade classrooms in the study, children enjoy listening to the teacher tell a story on a disc. In kindergarten or the first grade the teacher may ask them only to follow the pictures as she tells the story. She may then invite them to illustrate it with their own pictures. In the second and third grades, lessons are frequently assigned to the group to follow the directions given. As in most school activities, values are compounded. Not only do the children gain in listening power; they also gain in ability to follow directions, which may lead to creative as well as dictated activity; and they gain in independence and ego-satisfaction.

Activities which involve the creative capacities are especially stimulating to the use of oral language:

dramatizing, particularly when boys and girls make their own dramatizations or plays; preparing for and taking a trip; and planning and showing something of interest to classmates or parents.

Children learn to write. — The need to write follows the need to speak. Most children entering school have a beginning in writing in that they have had pencils, crayons, and paper; and seeing others write, they have imitated with an entirely individual style. Most of the children we are considering here have had no pencils, crayons, or paper before coming to school, and they may not have seen others writing. For them, this introduces a completely unknown activity, unrecognized as a form of communication.

Much care is taken, concurrent with techniques used for vocabulary building, to relate writing to communication. Labels, word and phrase cards, experience stories, name charts, and the like are used naturally but with dramatic emphasis on the writing function.

Eventually a child makes small attempts at writing (really copying) his own name and certain other important words — such as *boy, girl, trip, baby, mother,* and *car.* Alphabet letter forms are introduced and letters in short words already known receive careful attention. With daily practice, legible writing slowly emerges.

By the end of the first grade, some children will be well on the way to using writing as a way of communicating; within the second and third years, many will begin to use it as a valuable tool for making records, for invitations, letters, charts, compositions, stories, plays, and many other activities.

Children learn to read. — In spite of the fact that these children are educationally handicapped, it is important that they make as much progress in reading as they can within the primary unit.

The building of an oral language as prerequisite to dealing with a printed language is stressed, although this does not preclude the teacher's development of speaking-reading-writing relationships, as in the use of labels and experience stories described earlier.

Since many of the children do not interpret reading as life-related, this relationship must be established. The teacher writes — or prints — as she goes about

her work. For example, saying "We put on our aprons," she writes the sentence on a chart and sketches an apron; saying "We wash our hands," she writes it on a chart and sketches hands; saying "one," she draws *one* symbol, such as a square; saying "two," she draws *two* squares; and saying "I saw a kitten," she writes and draws. Slowly with some, rapidly with others, the reading-life situation relationship is perceived and a sizable step taken toward reading achievement.

From kindergarten on, most teachers make much use of experience charts[3] in which children dictate short stories which the teacher writes on the chalkboard. These are built around trips, pets, science observations, and other interests. Gradually, and without pressure, first- and second-grade teachers lead children to read parts of the stories, engaging them in study of words and word parts, phrases, and even sentences. Older children learn to use both word and phrase cards for their own independent and small group study.

[3] Examples of such charts are included in a later section.

One first-grade teacher observed had children fill in the appropriate words on a space on the chalkboard, which, except for the fill-in words, remained the same day after day.

> Today is *Tuesday.*
> It is *March 12.*
> It is a *sunny* day.
> *We have a new boy.*

At the bottom, she provided a daily surprise statement, hidden by a runner of paper until the dramatic moment of its unveiling. The surprise statement might be: "We have a new boy" (as in the chart above) or "Sally has a baby sister" or "A robin is building a nest outside our window." Then someone read the statement, or if the strain proved too great, she did so. Adults who have not taught young children would be hard pressed to estimate the children's enthusiasm.

Periodically the teacher develops a few charts in

order to apply in unfamiliar situations the words, phrases, and sentences which children have learned to recognize. As they gain skill, she includes some which are used commonly in the preprimer or other reading material which she will introduce for beginning reading.

Books are displayed strategically and attractively for personal or group examination, and the teacher makes much of enjoying them, especially through discussion. She may show a filmstrip about a book, or she may read from a book to pique curiosity. With young children especially, to encourage self-identification with the content, many teachers are making an effort to secure books — or to make them — of multicultural interests, dealing with life situations the children understand. Eventually, when children demonstrate an interest in reading, and when she feels that success is insured, the teacher introduces books as readers, moving back and forth from charts to books as the situation demands, sometimes using them concurrently, helping each child to do as much as he can.

Most school children are ready for activities which lead directly to reading during the first few months of the first grade. Among the disadvantaged, however, the numbers who need extensive leadup activities will be greater and the rate of progress slower. The teacher, however, must maintain and show faith that they can and will progress, and must take pride in any progress.

The ways of teaching disadvantaged boys and girls to read vary as much as those used with other children. In all situations, carefully planned attention is given to the preparation, or readiness, for reading. Many activities which lead to reading have been described: those which lead to self-confidence; to the use of language; to discriminatory abilities in vision, observation, speech, and hearing; to interest in books and what they contain; to general interest and independence. Basing her judgment on her own observation, as well as on the help of reading-readiness tests, the teacher introduces and paces reading instruction according to individual abilities.

Most teachers in the study make use of a basic

reading system, with rich supplementary and reinforcing materials, sometimes of their own making. Emphasis from the start is, in most cases, on getting the meaning from the printed page. So important is this that some cities — Detroit, Baltimore, and San Francisco, for instance — sensing the need for children to identify with the characters and situations in the readers, are developing and using beginning reading materials with familiar settings and a multicultural approach.

No teacher observed limits the approach to reading to any one method. Instead, even though she may emphasize a particular method or one aspect of a method, she turns to various other procedures to elaborate, clarify, reinforce, enrich, or extend reading interests and achievements.

A pervasive factor in learning to read is understanding how to "figure out" the pronunciation of new words. Teachers in all classrooms visited, especially those above kindergarten, recognized that "phonics" represents fundamental skills which most children must acquire. Several cities are making it a responsibility of the reading consultant to see that this aspect of reading is included. The major differences in teaching practice occur as to when "phonics" and structural analysis are taught — whether prior to, apart from, or within and accompanying the use of basic readers; and how much phonics and structural analysis are taught to a child, group, or class.

One teacher, who presents and analyzes a new word thoroughly at the beginning of each lesson, expressed the belief that "it helps children see and hear words better; it gives them something to 'hang on to' as they move ahead." This creative teacher, who has a thorough background in the teaching of reading, does not depend on a basic reader, but is developing her own materials for use with her boys and girls.

In some first- and second-grade groups observed, word analysis is conducted apart from the content of the readers the children are using, although the words selected are well known to most children. With the use of chalkboard, charts, overhead projectors, cards, and games, children are slowly led to recognize

such elements as beginning and ending sounds and letters, and to build words by substituting letter sounds and letters.

No matter when or how children learn to use word analysis and how they learn to read, teachers are judges of progress and of continuing or lagging interest; and methods must be adapted to meet the individual characteristics of children.

Children learn to play and work. — Under knowledgeable and skillful teachers, necessary activities usually derive from a unified center of study in such a manner that children conceive of them not so much as subjects, but as interesting parts of living and learning at school. Most of the activities combine work and pleasure so that the children — and sometimes the teacher — can hardly distinguish between what is work and what is play. Deprived children even more than others require such an atmosphere, for out of it come such qualities as trust, self-assurance, self-direction, and daring to reach out beyond the known.

Throughout the primary years, these children gain much — and not in academic areas alone. They acquire attitudes toward learning and habits of pursuing (or turning away from) learning. A trip is a failure when it does not result in a quest for learning, causing a child to raise such queries as "How does the lion feed her baby?" "What makes it rain?" "What makes grass grow?" "Does a chicken really come out of an egg?" "Where does a grocery get so many things?" The pursuit leads to pictures, filmstrips, discussions, books, contributors from the community, and perhaps, eventually to another trip. Courtesy requires notes or letters of request and acknowledgment; record-making calls for picture folios, experience charts, and charts of plans, of "what we found out," and of "what we want to find out next."

Dramatizations, role-playing, songs, games, drawing, painting, and clay modeling serve to clarify ideas and feelings; poetry, rhythm, and dance serve to solidify form at the same time they develop freedom and coordination of movement. The competent teacher seeks opportunities to guide boys and girls to achieve-

ment in skills and knowledge, setting aside time for needed study or meaningful practice; estimating constantly — sometimes testing — the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of each child; and charting a path for him — sometimes with him — for his continuous growth.

Gradually a child's fears drop off, his interests expand, his attention span lengthens, and his power to concentrate and follow through increases. Hopefully not many children will need additional time before they are ready for the next school unit; but should this be necessary, it will be recognized and dealt with in such a way as to help the child maintain faith in himself and progress in his school learning.

PROMISING PRACTICES

THE LARGER CITIES ARE USING SUCCESSFUL PRACtices already recognized, as well as innovations in organization and teaching methods in order to provide disadvantaged children with adequate education. The brief descriptions which follow include programs which one or more cities are enthusiastically supporting in primary grades.

Organizational Changes

Schools change or adapt their organizational patterns to give children better educational advantages. Some of these patterns affect child attendance, progress, and promotion; others, the cooperation of teachers.

1. *The ungraded primary* — A plan whereby a child advances at his own rate, without undue pressure and without the onus of failure. Teachers sometimes continue with their children. (4, 14)

2. *The family plan* — A plan similar to the above, in that children remain together and with the same teacher for several years.

3. *Team teaching* — A plan in which four or five teachers of varying competencies work for a part of the day with a group of 100 or more children of the same grade level, then divide them for individual or small group work according to their needs. Advantages mentioned were (*a*) the possibility of having very small groups when needed, (*b*) cooperative planning by teachers in relation to teaching, and (*c*) cooperative study by teachers in relation to understanding and guiding children. The danger cited was the possibility of losing the cooperative or "team"

approach in relation to teaching and guidance, and consequent losses incurred by children.

4. *Teaching team* — Several teachers in a large school who are helped by a team leader serving across grade lines to coordinate planning, testing, teaching, and other services to children; to give special assistance to new teachers; and to work with parents. The team meets weekly or oftener; team leaders in the district also meet weekly.

5. *Junior primary or junior first grade* — A plan which provides a year between kindergarten and first grade for those who, despite all help given, are not ready to cope with first-grade work. Work is not repetitive, but continuous. Children may be moved at any time. A junior primary child may move directly into grade two at the end of the year.

6. *Junior second, third, and fourth grades* — A plan which provides a year between grades one and two, two and three, and three and four for children who are not capable of going ahead, but who may be expected to gain appreciably by spending a year in work tailored to their needs. This year is intended to avoid repetition of subject matter and to substitute achievement for failure.

7. *Reception room* — A room where children entering the school for the first time are tested and studied before being assigned in the school. Children may be in the room several days or weeks.

8. *The divided day* — A plan whereby half the children report an hour early and leave an hour early; half come an hour later, providing the teacher with a smaller group at both ends of the day. Reading and related language arts are usually taught in these periods of reduced class size. In one school, lunch is staggered so that primary teachers may concentrate on small group teaching during part of the lunch period.

In addition to the above changes, which affect mainly the organization of classes, many schools are establishing central libraries to insure that attractive books and other educational materials suited to the varied interests and learning needs of the children in the school are readily accessible.

Reduction of Teacher-Pupil Ratio

The success of children who are growing up in disadvantaged areas is highly dependent on the one-to-one teacher-pupil relationship that enables the teacher to understand the pupil and encourages the development of self-confidence and ultimate achievement in the child. Realizing this, school administrators generally adapt the local personnel formula to provide a lower-than-average pupil-teacher ratio for all or part of the day in schools dealing with large numbers of these children. Other means, such as the following, are also used to lower the teacher-pupil ratio:

1. The State of California "McAteer Compensatory Education Program" provides funds to be applied to lowering the teacher load, improving reading, and teaching English to non-English-speaking pupils. Under this provision, some California school systems assign teachers to schools to work with selected children daily for periods varying from 45 to 50 minutes to half the school day. Assistance is given mainly in reading and related language arts, in preparing and carrying out trips, and in followup work.
2. "Reserve teachers" take either groups of 8 to 12 children for one hour each day to help them in areas of weakness, or the lowest reading group in a classroom for the regular reading period. They also accompany teachers on home visits, take children on trips, and assist in other ways.
3. "Master teachers" are assigned on the basis of 1 master teacher to 6 - 10 inexperienced teachers to help them and to work with small groups of children.
4. Teachers with strength in reading are assigned to take approximately half a class for 2 hours each half day. Concentration is on language arts and social studies. These teachers also assist with the inservice education of teachers in the school.
5. Three teachers are assigned to two class-

rooms. The third member spends half of each day in each room, working with groups on language arts or mathematics.

6. A "supplemental teacher" takes 12 to 15 children for one-fourth of the day for whatever help is needed.
7. Teachers are assigned to reteach reading to small groups, that is, to reinforce the teaching in the regular classroom. In one city, each school has 10 weeks of such service in the fall, winter, or spring in grades 1, 2, and 3.
8. Reading centers in different areas of the city take selected individuals or small groups for remedial help for an hour or more daily.
9. "Remedial reading teachers" are apportioned to schools to work in two grades (one-two, three-four, five-six) to help children, to give on-site demonstrations for teachers, and to help secure needed materials for teaching reading.
10. Parents are selected and given training in serving, on paid time, as aides in the classrooms. They help children listen to tapes, use the library and secure material; and help the teacher with recordkeeping and in other ways which do not require professional training. (A side effect is increased attendance at PTA meetings.)
11. In New York's 14 All-Day Neighborhood Schools, 7 extra teachers — one to each grade level, K to 6 — and a supervisor are assigned to each school, reporting at 10:40 a.m. and remaining until 5 p.m. daily. Until 3 p.m. when school hours are over, the teachers work on a definite teaching schedule with not more than three small groups of children; from 3 to 5 p.m. they conduct an activity program composed of homework study, interest clubs, individual hobbies, trips, games, reading, and other enrichment activities.

Special Staff Assistance

Additional staff services, beyond the customary allotment, are frequently assigned or made available to schools enrolling large numbers of disadvantaged children. These are provided by the school system, the State, foundations, and voluntary services. Among services found in one or more of the 16 cities are the following:

1. Counselors[4] to work with teachers and parents in relation to problems of the children.
2. Psychiatric social worker, or psychologist, to handle difficult children and to be available as consultant to the staff.
3. Home visitor, or school social worker, to serve as liaison between school and home.
4. Visiting nurse to work particularly on health-related problems which involve the home.
5. School nurse to give attention to health and health problems of children.
6. Language arts specialist assigned to one or several schools to help teachers analyze and meet the language needs of specific children in the class or school.
7. A mathematics specialist to teach or to help teachers teach mathematics.
8. A secretary to assist with recordkeeping and reporting.
9. Substitutes, often retired teachers, to release classroom teachers for observation, home visiting, and parent conferences.
10. Bilingual teachers to teach English to non-English-speaking children.
11. Speech specialist to assist in correction of speech difficulties.
12. Librarians, full or part time, to maintain and administer the library and to help teachers and children select books.

[4] Terms are those used by the local schools.

13. Resource teachers to work in art, music, physical education, and speech.
14. Teacher assigned full time to several schools to identify community resources with high potential for education, to secure or prepare material for teachers, to plan trips with the teacher and make all necessary out-of-school arrangements including transportation, to accompany the children and teacher on the trip, to include parents if needed, and to assist with the followup activities in the classroom.
15. School-community agent to work with and assist the staff; work with parents, agencies, and organizations; and organize an after-school activity program for children. In one school, this agent operates 120 once-a-week, after-school activities including German, French, Spanish, reading, mathematics, art, creative art, exploratory art, creative writing, construction, and a story hour for younger children. Teachers are volunteers from the staff, high school students (usually Future Teachers of America), and parents.
16. Supplementary teachers and college students paid to teach, after school as many as 20 hours a week, such classes as remedial reading, spelling, library, mathematics, homework, leadership, and other interests indicated by the children.
17. Student teachers employed as teacher assistants, when they are not practice-teaching, to work with individual and small groups, as library helpers, clerks, and in other ways designated by the staff.
18. College and high school student volunteers, without pay, to tutor in the language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; to operate interest clubs; and to help in other ways.
19. Settlement houses, churches, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, the Newman Club, and other organizations,

usually in cooperation with the school system, to operate study centers for children and youth. The school usually advises on or assists with staff and program.

20. The Junior League and other voluntary organizations to provide opportunities for children after school, on Saturday, and in the summer. Activities include trips to museums, parks, theaters, and interest clubs.

The School and Parents

"We are running down the road on three wheels," said a principal. "We need the fourth — home support. We collect magazines from the teachers and others and sell them cheaply; we collect adult books and try to circulate them. Parents buy, but they don't come to school. Part of our trouble is that the teachers are so good that the parents are happy and don't see any need to come. The PTA plans excellent study programs — for a handful of 20 to 30 adults. Put on an entertainment using their own children, and 400 of them swarm in. We're going to give it another try on 'the new math.' " This "try" overflowed the school's auditorium, and parents asked for more.

"We are not the only teachers; there are two sets," said another principal. "They must support each other. Parents would not come to school so we invited 60 individually, chosen at random. They came. Now a group comes every Friday afternoon for 45 minutes to an hour. They build their own agenda. Some are parents of children in trouble. Sometimes the attendance officer or a Youth Commission member is invited."

Parents from disadvantaged areas, too, are eager to be in touch with their children's activities at school. The problem is how to reach them and how to induce them to make the extra effort to come to the school.

These parents are not always friendly to the school. Among them are many who were last generation's school dropouts, adults now realizing the handicaps of not being well educated, but also filled with fear of and aggression toward the school. Among them, too, are in-migrants from other parts of our

country, who find themselves to be strangers in a strange land. Among them are many men and women who, because they work hard physically, seek relaxation in the evening or depend on those hours to take care of the family. Coming out in the evening is costly in effort and must be highly rewarding. The gains must be visible beforehand. To be attractive, the program must be something *they* want for their own understanding or skill, or to help them identify better with their children. When they reach the school, the way must be made as easy as possible: provisions made for care of the young children they must bring; hosts and hostesses to ease the strain of meeting new people; and refreshments (to which they may eventually contribute) served informally during a simple social hour which encourages making friends with neighbors and teachers.

A Father-Son Night when a child brings his father, similarly a Mother-Daughter Talent Night for which members of the community sign up in advance (with some screening) may be effective ways of drawing people in.

There are ways other than public meetings, however, to encourage parents to take an interest in their children's education. Following are some activities which have been found successful:

- Children take books home to show parents how they can read, or to have older brothers or sisters read to them.
- Children are permitted to "join" the community center library and take books out if a parent will come with them on their first trip. (The attendant said that she intended finally to give them all a card, whether or not the condition was met, but that more parents than were expected came.)
- The school collects appropriate paperback books for sale to parents for themselves and their children's use.
- The school collects used magazines for sale to parents at very little cost or as a gift.
- Parents are invited to accompany children on school trips.
- Parents are supplied with suggestions for taking their own children on after-school or weekend trips. Information is given on transportation routes and fares, entrance fees (if any), appropriate clothing, avail-

ability of food, provision for young children, and hours of visitation.

- Parents are invited to help in the school. Qualifications are made known; parents apply, are screened and interviewed by the principal; and a needed number are selected and given necessary training. Parents can help, on free or paid time, in classrooms as aides, on the playground, in the lunchroom, in the halls, and in other locations for activities not considered professional.

- Parents are invited to see films and hear tapes in which their children are featured.

- Parent-teacher conferences are held at times convenient for the parents. Provisions are made to care for small children, and topics are suggested to help parents know what they may wish to talk about. One school[5] in a severely disadvantaged area produced a guide with suggestions under four headings: *What Parents Can Do To Help Their Children To Read, Some Questions Parents May Want Answered, Activities To See in First Grade,* and *What If My Child Is Slow in Learning To Read?* This school also circulates *Helpful Hints for Parents of Primary Children,* and schedules helpful meetings for parents on topics of concern.

Summer Opportunities

Many school systems offer summer study for pupils in the schools. For several years, the District of Columbia has conducted a summer school for children from disadvantaged neighborhoods who were to enter kindergarten or first grade in the fall. The 1964 summer school enrolled 400 such children.

Chicago provided summer school opportunities in 1964 in 20 elementary schools for 100 children in grades 1 to 6 with class size limited to 25. Student population included half who read at or about grade level, and half below grade level. The purpose was to experiment with ways of teaching children in densely populated areas and to motivate children to learn.[6]

In a "changing" neighborhood in Cincinnati, parents of children in the school most affected planned cooperatively with the principal and then conducted after-school, Saturday, and summer school enrichment classes for children.

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[5] George Carver Schoool, Chicago, Illinois.

[6] Chicago Public Schools. *The Story of the Special Summer Schools.* Chicago: Board of Education, 1963, 59 p.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AFFECTING THE DISADVANTAGED PRIMARY CHILD

SEVERAL CITIES ARE EXPANDING PROGRAMS ALREADY in existence, but giving special attention to disadvantaged children. Some have recently undertaken programs with foundation support which they hope to continue. Programs in the 16 cities which affect children in the primary grades are briefly described below.

New York[7]

Early Identification Program. — A program in operation since 1959 to "identify and meet special needs of children in grades kindergarten through third year, with special emphasis on second grade. Its aims are to identify children's abilities, talents, and problems early in school life," and to plan ways to help children develop as mentally healthy individuals. A team of one guidance counselor, a half-time social worker, and a half-time psychologist, with the consultative help of a psychiatrist, works in cooperation with other appropriate school personnel.

All-Day Neighborhood Schools. — A program in existence since 1936, now operating in 14 centers with a threefold purpose:

> (1) Work in curriculum and guidance during the school day in a team relationship with classroom teachers, with special emphasis on the implementation of a sound reading program on all grade levels; (2) a specialized group work program after school from 3 to 5 p.m., supporting the day school reading program by providing enriching experiences which give an opportunity for both emotional growth and fur-

[7] New York Board of Education. *Handbook: Division of Elementary Schools*, New York: The Board, 1963-64, 50 p.

ther language development; (3) close cooperation with home, community, and child serving agencies.

Non-English Program. — A program, established in 1949, particularly to devise ways to deal with the problem of educating the incoming Puerto Rican children. Special coordinators and auxiliary or Spanish-speaking teachers are assigned to the affected schools. An important feature of the program is "Operation Understanding," in which a corps of Puerto Rican teachers is maintained to supply firsthand information to teachers. Another feature is a visiting program which sends teachers and administrators to Puerto Rico each year.

Baltimore[8]

An Early School Admissions Project. — A program established in 1962 in two schools "to enrich the lives of four- and five-year-old, out-of-school children requiring compensating educational services." It is designed to accelerate achievement, increase parental understanding and responsibility, and mobilize community resources in behalf of children. Extra facilities are provided as needed by the selected schools. Children attend a half day every day in one school, and all day in the other. Each center is staffed by a teaching team of four adults: the senior teacher, the assistant teacher, the teacher aide, and a volunteer who serves on a one-day, once-a-week rotating basis. The senior teacher is a competent teacher of young children and skillful in working with parents; the assistant teacher is also experienced but is recruited from outside the city; the teacher aide (who may be a parent) performs clerical work and other activities. Volunteers from social and service groups assist in many ways. The program emphasizes the development of communication skills, qualitative thinking, aesthetic values, good physique, self-understanding, and awareness and understanding of the environment.

[8] Baltimore City Public Schools. *An Early School Admissions Project: Progress Report, 1963-1964.* Baltimore, Md.: City Public Schools, 1964, 71 p.

Pittsburgh[9]

Team Teaching. — A project designed to help disadvantaged children by increasing motivation, finding and developing talent, broadening opportunities, and providing extra help to those who need it. Pupils are instructed in varying sizes of groups and periods of time. The team consists of one team leader who is a master teacher; four regular teachers, each with a class of 36; one teacher intern, who is a college student; and one team mother, who is a parent paid for her time. The leader teaches a full load; calls weekly meetings of the team; coordinates the program; reports to the principal on matters of policy, space, and equipment; and is responsible generally for the success of the program. Teams on the primary level are organized on grade level lines; on the intermediate level, along subject lines.

[9] Pittsburgh Board of Public Education. *Pupils, Patterns, and Possibilities.* 1961 Annual Report. Pittsburgh, Pa.: The Board, 1962. 31 p.

SOME CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM PROCEDURES, which were collected by Office of Education specialists late in the school year, illustrate some of the characteristics and motivations of children as well as techniques used by teachers.

Kindergarten, In a Severely Disadvantaged Area

Children were playing with pegboards in which pegs fit the numbers 1 to 5 only when they are correctly chosen. Others were constructing with blocks or bricks, painting at easels, playing "house," or looking at picture books. Many other materials, including triangles and drums, were stored along one side of the room. Four boys arranged themselves to produce a "Beatles" show; a small group looked at pictures of themselves in a folio. A girl from this group brought a picture to the visitor, proudly saying, "My mudda."

At a signal, materials were put away and two children helped serve milk. At the close of this activity, the teacher introduced a simple jigsaw puzzle. After she solved it, she asked, "Why is it a hard puzzle?" A child ventured, "Because I did it." The teacher did not challenge this, but gave her the puzzle and several children joined her in efforts to solve it.

Kindergarten, A Group of Non-English-Speaking Children

The teacher worked with seven children, teaching vocabulary and inflection thus:

Teacher: "What is this?"
Boy: "Box."
Teacher: "It's a box — It's a box." (repeats rhythmically) "What is it?"
Boy: "It's a box." (The teacher then asked each

child to repeat this, looking directly at each as he said it. Several required help.)

The teacher repeated the exercise with *bag, pencil, book,* and *table.* She introduced *ch* as a sound rhythmically; children joined in: "Ch--ch--ch--ch--ch."

Teacher: "This is a *chair.*"
Children: "Chair."

Each child then took a turn sitting on it, saying, "It's a chair."

Several children dramatized "Hi, diddle, diddle," as all recited the nursery rhyme with the teacher.

A boy approached the visitor, bringing a chair. He then rejoined the other children who were reciting and dramatizing "Jack and Jill," "Humpty Dumpty," and "Little Miss Muffet" with evident joy.

Kindergarten, In a Less Disadvantaged Area

A teacher showed the visitor a folio of children's dictated stories. Charles had dictated the following story and illustrated it in crayon with cross-cultural figures representing the makeup of his class:

Our class went on a trip to the civic center. We went to the library. We went to other places in the civic center, too. We saw Mr. _____ (superintendent of schools). Mr. _____ took our pictures in color. We went to the art festival. We had fun. We rode the bus there and walked back.

Gladys had dictated:

Dear Mr. _____,
Thank you for letting us visit the annex post office. We liked coming. We had a nice trip and visit. Thank you for having ladies show us around. They helped us very much.

Your Little Gladys

With other children helping, Margaret had dictated:

Our Trip

When we went on our trip we went to Coit Tower. When we got up there we could see the Golden Gate Bridge and the Bay Bridge. We could see Treasure Island, Angel Island, Alcatraz Island, and Yerba Buena Island. Far down below we could see warehouses and the piers.

In another kindergarten, also in a less disadvantaged area, the teacher had written on the board:

Fred can feed the fish.
Janet can help Fred.
Felix said, "I see the surprise."
Connie can get the surprise.
Valentina said, "Is the surprise something yellow?"
Oscar said, "Is the surprise funny?"

After children read this, the teacher said, "There is a surprise under your chair. First, let's smile; then get out your glasses (imaginary) for reading. Shall we guess what's under the chair?"

Teacher: "Is it a ribbon?"
Child: "No, it is not a ribbon."
Teacher: "Is it some little bows?"
Child: "No, it is not little bows."
Teacher: "Is it a note for your mother?"
Child: "No, it is not a note for my mother."
Child: "Is it a book?"
Teacher: "Yes, get your books."
Teacher: "What did we read first?"
Children: *"My Big Red Story Book."*
Teacher: "What did we read second?"
Children: *"My Little Red Story Book."*
Teacher: "Third?"
Children: *"My Little Green Story Book."*
Teacher: "Next?"
Children: *"My Little Blue Story Book."*
Teacher: "How many does that make?"
Children (counting): "Four!"
Teacher: "Show us."
Child: (Writes 1111 on the board)
Teacher: "Turn to our books."
Child: "You're the one I love best."
Teacher: "Put your finger on the title. Who will start?" (Hands. Several children read a page with ease and pleasure.)

Between Kindergarten and Grade 1, In a Less Disadvantaged Area

This class was divided into four reading groups, with child leaders in charge under the teacher's direction.

One group of seven children was studying a mimeographed page using these words, which were displayed on the chalkboard:

Fix-fix
Rod-rod
Hot Rod
hot rod

Another group of 6 working with a child leader was naming 20 objects pictured on a chart. They then matched initial letters imprinted on cards to the appropriate pictures. The teacher led them as rapidly as possible through flash cards and a review of words from the story in the basic reader. She then gave the group phrase and sentence cards with the instruction that they were to make a story out of them.

Another group worked at a magnetic board under a leader's direction. She placed *at* on the board, and children found some initial sounds, making *pat, cat, fat, bat, sat, hat,* and *mat.* The leader then posted *et,* and children made *get, set, pet, bet, jet.* They then gave the sounds of single letters.

A group came to the teacher for flash card study of words like *came, ride, like, mine, ugly, glum, such, plenty, rags, string, other, kite, my, made,* and *bet.*

The first group reported to read a story on the board based on the words *fix, rod,* and *hot rod.*

As groups finished, they joined the activity at a table of their own choosing: for numbers, clay work, crafts, or reading games.

Grade 1

The children in this grade had taken a trip to Fairyland, a play center, on the preceding day. One boy had missed the trip, and a girl was bringing him up-to-date over a telephone. Others were listening to fill in what she might omit. She told about the bus, a puppet show, a slide, a Japanese tree house, seals, a store, turtles, a clown, monkeys, birds, ducks, lunch, Humpty Dumpty, Alice in Wonderland, "and that's all." The boy responded, "I'm sorry I missed it. Goodbye." Everyone seemed satisfied that she had not omitted anything.

This room had many objects to stimulate speech and discrimination, and to encourage concept develop-

ment. A parent-aide whom the staff had given some training spent 2 hours each day assisting children in the use of equipment and in many other ways.

Since actual telephone numbers were dialed, children's numbers had to be secured and listed. A tape recorder held dictated lessons and a daily surprise. A *Touch and Tell Box* held objects for feeling. Children attempted to describe what they felt. A *Music Box* held records and pictures of musical instruments. Children played a record and identified the instruments used. A *Sound Box* held envelopes with beginning word sounds. The children matched words to pictures which were included in the envelopes.

In another school a tutoring center in reading had been set up for first graders. Thirty able sixth-graders who volunteered to tutor these students were trained in the field of reading. Each was intent upon helping the child who had been assigned to him. The supervisor explained the program in the following way: The "tutor" is taught how to plan a lesson, how to approach the child, how to give him help, and how to keep records. He is supplied a kit with reading games, paper, pencils, and some pictures, and has easy access to a supply center for additional materials.

Children and tutors gather daily for 30 minutes in a small room where a teacher-supervisor presides over approximately 10 or 12 pairs at a time. Three such sessions occur daily — 10:00 to 10:30, 10:30 to 11:00, and 11:30 to 12:00.

The sixth-graders show enthusiasm for their work and assume genuine responsibility. The children who are now in grade seven and who participated in the program last year return on their own initiative to tutor fifth-graders on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons after school.

Teachers consider the program productive because of the children's progress in reading and the effect upon their personality development. "Having a continuous friendship with a fine 'older child' has untold value; it is an ego-building experience for both older and younger children," said one teacher.

Teachers and principals in other schools who have observed the program express interest in adopting one in their own schools.

Several children in another first-grade class were at the board. The teacher asked them how to write *street.*

Teacher: "How does it start?"
Children: "St--st"
Teacher: "I st--- on the street."
Children: "Stand." (They wrote it.)
Teacher: "I-I-I. I feel so ill. What rhymes?"
Children: "Still."
Teacher: "What word rhymes with day?"
Children: "Stay." (They wrote it.)
Teacher: "Let's look at an old family. L-o-o-k."
Children (as teacher wrote on board): "Look, book, hook, took, cook."
Teacher: "How do we pronounce this?"
Children: "Look."

About the room were a cardboard clock, a picture of a circus, a chart of colors, a chart of news, self-portraits of the children done in crayons, and a large mural of "Chicken Little." The children expressed pride in the boy who made the mural.

Grade 1, In a Very Disadvantaged Area

A teacher and a student aide were helping a class of children with their school activities. Around the room were charts and displays which reflected the out-of-door environment which could be seen from the window, such as:

Rocks are little.
Rocks are big.
Little rocks come from big rocks.
Rocks are made under water.
Rocks are made by fire.
Rocks are made from other rocks.
Rocks help our city.
Rocks are smooth.
Rocks are hard.
Rocks are soft.
Rocks are of many colors.

A Car

A car is passing through the tunnel.
I saw this from the window.

Baby Tree

We have a little tree outside our window.
We call her *Baby Tree.*
We can watch her grow.
From our window we see trains trucks cars taxis tunnels tall houses

Other charts reflected life in school:

We have fun with

Blocks	Puzzles	Games
Dolls	Toys	
Paints	Books	

We have one can of pineapple juice.
We put one hole in the can. No juice.
We put two holes in the can.
Look! Look what happened.
(Drawing of can with juice flowing)

The grade 1 room in another very disadvantaged area was equipped much like the adjoining kindergarten; and although it was late in the year, children were still struggling to acquire a vocabulary. The children were led to read the following chart, circle certain words, and underline certain phrases.

Today is Thursday.
It is May 14, 1964.
It is a cloudy day.
It is a warm day.

Other charts, illustrated with many pictures of caged animals, reflected a trip to the zoo:

At the Zoo

The bus took us to the zoo.
Here are different animals.
The tiger has yellow eyes.

At the Zoo

The big gray elephant
The rabbit with his pink nose
The little yellow ducks
Fun! Fun! Oh, what fun!

At the Zoo

The animals say hello to you.
The ducks, pigs, and seals,
The lions and tigers, too
Class 1 loves the zoo.

At the Zoo

A cow is big.
A cow gives milk.
Milk is good for me.

The children read the "cow chart" and then copied it for a writing lesson.

Poems and nursery rhymes were illustrated.

Number charts showed how the figures 1, 2, . . . 9 look. Capital *N* and small *n* were shown, and the children filled in the boxes with the capital letter form.

N n

nuts ☐ net ☐
nine ☐ nose ☐
next ☐

Finally, a chart showed an exciting event due very soon in the city.

Our Circus

The circus is in town.
See the lions and tigers.
The great big elephants too.
Funny clowns looking at you.

Grade 2

Half of the children were in the back of the room with a teacher, and half were in the front with an assistant.

Group 1 — The teacher cracked a coconut. The children had an opportunity to feel and smell it. After a discussion, the children took turns dictating a sentence until this chart was formed:

Our Coconut

Miss _____ brought a coconut to school.
The coconut was very good.
We opened the coconut.
Miss _____ made a hole in the coconut's eye.
Miss _____ cracked the coconut.
The coconut is real white inside.
The coconut smells good inside.
We will eat it tomorrow.

The children read it several times, and then drew pictures of it.

Group 2 — Some boys carried in an imaginary, heavy box.

Teacher: "What is your surprise?"
Boy: "A cowboy hat. I had asked for it, but I was surprised anyway."

Girl: "A new coat for Easter."
Girl: "A new mink coat."
Girl: "You're stepping on the box."
Teacher: "Oh, pardon me."
Boy: "A toy derrick."
Girl: "It's an invisible box."
Teacher: "Here are some small boxes" (also imaginary). "Take one."
Teacher: "Let's open one. Save the ribbon!"
Girl: "I have a new portable TV. I can turn it on."
Boy: "I'll plug it in." (He did.)
Boy: "I got me a fox."
Girl: "I have a new school set: chalkboard, chalk, eraser, a school teacher, a desk, paper, chairs, pencils, books, and closet" (looking about the room). "But I don't have any children."
Girl (lifting and grunting): "I got a dress, a mink coat, a hat, a transistor radio, a purse, a book, and a big bed."
Girl: "I got a coconut. I'll crack it." (She did.)
Boy: "I have a model airplane carrier with 100 men, 10 machine gun men, and a plane for the captain."
Boy: "I have planes, cars, ships, and some funny things for going under the sea."
Boy: "I have a bow and arrow set. I can shoot animals. I have a machine gun, too."

In another second-grade classroom the teacher showed some pictures to encourage action words and clear enunciation of word endings.

Teacher: "What does the picture show?"
Child: "It shows . . . a girl walking under a tree."
Teacher (to another): "What do *you* see?
Child: "A girl walking."
Child: "She is looking at something."

Responses to other pictures: "He is jumping." "He is swimming." "The girl is painting the chairs." "A boy is walking to school." "The goat is eating grass." "Children are ice-skating." "The boy is running."

Teacher: "I will give you a clue" (starting as if to whistle). "What sound is it?"
Child: "Wheel. Wh-- you are whistling."

Teacher: "Do you want to dramatize something for us to guess?"

The children took turns until all had an opportunity. Samples were swimming, talking, dancing, sewing, twisting, mopping, sweeping, thinking. The teacher put these on the board as they were pronounced. Then she said, "Arrange the words alphabetically." She then read one of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. In reply to her question of what a fairy tale is, a boy said, "Fairy tales are make-believe."

Second-grade teachers make much use of tapes. In one classroom a group of children wearing earphones heard the teacher say, "Open your social studies books to page ———. Read it to see what to do." (waiting) "Now you may do as it tells you." Each child went off to work in a business-like way. Later the teacher said, "It leads them to skim, and skimming is hard to teach. It also provides a sort of one-to-one relationship. Each feels that the directions on the tape are spoken especially for him."

In another second grade, children were studying Alaska. The teacher had the tape tell the children what to do to help her teach groups who needed help. In a "geology" lesson, they were directed to feel, smell, test. In a science lesson, a boy was directed in the making of a transistor radio. Foreign language lessons are taped for the use of absentees. Stories are put on tape, and children follow them in their books.

Grade 3

This group was drawn from two classrooms; eight pupils from each met for 2 hours daily to study the language arts. The teacher had another such group the other half of the day, thus reducing the enrollment in four regular classrooms for a 2-hour period daily.

The room was bright and stimulating. Photographs and commercial and child-made pictures showed children writing stories, using the dictionary, reading library books, alphabetizing, playing reading games, making and using puppets, using the tape recorder, writing and producing plays, and serving on the student council.

The teaching was mainly individualized, the teacher and child working together in a one-to-one relationship as often as possible. *The Lad and the North Wind* had been taped by the teacher for use in reading and diction lessons. *Big City Workers,* an overall social studies theme, was used as a source of self-image building. Experience trips were used as bases for classroom work, discussion, writing, art, social studies, and some mathematics. Five bus trips had been taken in studying "How We Get Our Food," three on "Communication," and three on "Transportation."

Samples of children's composition and reading progress showed great gain during the school year, one overage child gaining 2.9 months in reading and incidentally, raising her mental age considerably more.

Handwork is part of the program. Children made airplanes, models, charts, and other objects related to their studies.

The library in this school maintains more than 100 books per child; many books for slow readers and about human relations have recently been added. Children check books out during and after school hours.

A teacher of a group of children from grades 3 and 4 in the same school has a *Personality Book of Children,* in which boys and girls pore over the pictures and descriptions of themselves and their friends studying, on trips, and the like.

Another group of 10 or 12 third-grade children who obviously needed language development listened to the teacher read "Three Little Kittens."

Teacher: "What are the four parts?"

Children (as teacher wrote on the board):

"The kittens lost their mittens
They found their mittens
They soiled their mittens
They washed their mittens
They smelled a rat!" (laughing)

They then dramatized the story, repeating most of the words.

In preparation for reading a story, another group of seven children was having word study, discussing the pronunciation and meaning of such words and phrases as the following:

the Shenandoah Valley
the harvest machine
adjusted every part
was a failure.

They went on to independent study, and another group came for word study of such phrases as:

the violence of the storm
her cloth jodhpurs
the drift indicator.

On the board was the chart:

Today I had my party — it didn't rain.
There was ice cream and cake.
My puppy behaved and only two people didn't bring presents.
I did my poem the one about the cat and the dish and the moon.
I looked very beautiful in my dress.
That makes noise.

A group of seven children came to read with the teacher. They discussed the story and seemed quite excited about jets, parachutes, and the saving of a pilot's life. One boy ventured that he was on the way to inventing a collapsible boat. The teacher said, "And when you do, I will say, 'I taught him in school.' "

A child looked in three dictionaries before finding jodhpurs; then she read it with no struggle. The discussion of the theory continued on a somewhat technical level. Before they had finished, one child was searching in an encyclopedia for *manifold;* one had gone to the library and was looking up *manifold* in the big dictionary.

Grade 3, In a Very Disadvantaged Area

Teacher: "I will read to you, and you are to guess what I am talking about. I am orange. I have a face. I make good pie."
Child: "Pumpkin."
Teacher: "Why a pumpkin? What word helped?"
Child: "I'm orange. I have a face."
Teacher: "What is that?"
Child: "A jack o'lantern."

Teacher: "Here's another. I ride on a broomstick in the sky."
Child: "Witch."
Teacher: "What are these called?"
Child: "Riddles."
Teacher: "Would you like to make some?"
Children: "Yes."
Teacher: "Write a sentence telling what something looks like or what it is made of."

In another school the teacher gave each third-grade child an envelope with a picture and a description of an object. She asked several to read the description as others guessed the object. A sample description, of a basket, was: "I am brown. I am made out of straw. You take me on a picnic."

Children's talks were recorded on tape for later review. Children spoke on "My Dog," "To Be in the Rain," and "Book House." Book reports, too, are put on tape. These form a basis for language arts lessons.

Retarded Readers: Grades 3 and 4 Children Reading at Grades 2 and 3 Levels

Once a week, able children from grades 5 and 6 are paired with the disadvantaged children for concentration on oral vocabulary and reading development. The room is a reading laboratory provided with many materials, such as pictures, devices for practice in phonics, books, flash cards with words, and puppets. This laboratory is used by all the teachers, who come to borrow books and charts or to make materials. The supply of books must constantly be increased, and many discarded books have been drawn back from the warehouse. Children are permitted to take books home. Since family relations are at a low level in this area, this plan is most helpful.

THE TASK AHEAD

CHILDREN IN THE PRIMARY GRADES ARE ACQUIRING many of the habits, attitudes, and skills which will condition how, throughout their lives, they will take advantage of the educational, social, and economic privileges available to them as citizens. Each will make a contribution to society, either as an asset or a liability. Children such as those in this study are severely disadvantaged when they enter school, and conditions causing this may be continuous throughout their school lives. The responsibility — and the tremendous privilege — of the school is to assist these children, one by one, despite difficult conditions, to realize and develop their potentialities in the direction of personal responsibility, pride in achievement, and continuing desire for education. To any teacher who can achieve this, society will owe a lasting debt.

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National Association for the Education of Young Children
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